

# The Daily Courier

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## Dry winter could mean increased wildfire threat



Fire season could come earlier this year because of the dry and warm weather we have been experiencing this winter. (Les Stukenberg/Courier)

### Governor asks for more fire prevention funds after dry winter

By SCOTT ORR  
The Daily Courier

This year's exceptionally dry winter has prompted Gov. Doug Ducey to ask the Legislature to boost funding for fire prevention efforts in the coming budget year, which begins July 1.

Ducey's office announced this past week its request for money to be doubled to remove brush and other dangerous fuels because the ongoing drought has vastly increased wildfire risk. The governor had earlier asked for \$1 million but now wants that amount increased to \$2 million.

The current fiscal year's \$1 million

for fire prevention wasn't completely spent, but Ducey is pushing the state Forestry and Fire Management Department to use all of the new funding.

It was warmer for January than usual in this region — 6.6 degrees warmer — and drier, too, with Prescott receiving only 1.14 inches of precipitation, or 0.45 of an inch less than the average.

Prescott tied a record high temperature of 67 degrees on Jan. 5, equaling the high on the same date in 2003, and again on Jan. 23, when it was 71

See DRY, page 10A

“Unless we see significant and repeated precip events between now and May, this summer is looking to be one of the driest — again — on record.”

— Pete Gordon of the Prescott National Forest

## Senate panel favors new abortion requirements

Doctors will have to ask the woman why before the procedure

By HOWARD FISCHER  
For the Courier

PHOENIX — Women who want an abortion would have to tell state health officials exactly why under the terms of legislation approved Wednesday by a Senate panel.

On a party-line vote, members of the Health and Human Services Committee approved adding a series of new requirements for abortion providers in Arizona.

na, who already are required by law to inform women about the nature of the procedure.

If the new, proposed requirements became law, abortion providers would also be required to report their own medical specialty, the type of facility where they perform abortions, whether anesthesia was administered to the mother or the fetus and the numbers of women they serve.

Doctors also would be required to detail how many of their patients have asked to hear the fetus' heartbeat, something doctors already have to offer to allow under current law.

But the heart of SB 1394 seeks to expand existing law, which now requires only that the facility ask an open-ended question of why the woman wants an abortion, whether it is elective or for reasons of maternal or fetal health.

Under the new proposal, health care providers would have to run through a checklist of possible reasons with the patient, ranging from economic reasons and relationship issues to the woman not wanting children at this time.

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## 17 killed at Florida school



Students released from a lockdown are overcome with emotion following a shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Fla., Wednesday, Feb. 14, 2018. (John McCall/South Florida Sun-Sentinel via AP) Story, 9A.

### Today's Weather

High 51° | Low 28°

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